

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

U.S. Appln. No. 10/687,963

Atty. Docket No. Q78072

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all the claims pending in the application, claims 12-16 being newly added herewith.

Drawings

The Examiner objects to Figs. 11-15, asserting that they should include a “Prior Art” label. Applicants have amended Figs. 11-15 in a manner believed to overcome the objection.

Specification - Objections

The Examiner objects to the abstract of the disclosure for various informalities. Applicants have amended the abstract in a manner believed to overcome the objection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claim 10 includes allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, since the rejection of the corresponding base claims are believed to be overcome, Applicant has not placed these claims in independent form at this time.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,922,993 (Hereinafter “Ide”). Claims 6-8 stand rejected to under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,327,777 (hereinafter “Ide2”). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ide and

claims 9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ide2. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections in view of the following arguments.

(A) Claims 1-3 and 5

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 1 as anticipated by Ide, because Ide fails to teach or suggest every element of claim 1. For example, claim 1 sets forth a first member with a first locking portion and a second member with a second locking portion. Claim 1 further sets forth that the first and second locking portions are fitted to each other. The Examiner asserts that the resin projecting portion (41) and the concave portion (43) taught by Ide meet the requirements of the first and second locking portions of claim 1. However, there is no suggestion that these portions constitute locking portions. Instead, these portions contact and are for pressurizing cover portions (3) of a pair of covered wires (W1 and W2), not locking a first and second member together (*See* column 8, lines 48-54). Further, although the projection portion (41) and the concave portion (43) may correspond to one another, it does not appear that they are actually fitted to one another. As seen in Figs. 5 and 7, the portions (41 and 43) are set apart from one another by wires (W1 and W2) disposed between them. These wires serve to separate the projection portion (41) and the concave portions (43), so that it does not appear that they are actually fitted together (*See* Fig. 7). At least for the above reasons, Ide fails to teach or suggest each and every element of claim 1. Claims 2, 3 and 5 depend from claim 1, and are allowable at least because of their dependency.

(B) Claims 6-8

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 6 as anticipated by Ide2 because Ide2 fails to teach or suggest every element of claim 6. Claim 6 teaches a first and second member which have lateral widths which are larger the width of the core lines of a covered wire when the core lines are laterally arrayed. The Examiner asserts that Ide2 teaches a plurality of core lines (1 and 2) and an upper resin tip (13) and a lower resin tip (14) that meet the requirements of the first and second members of claim 6 respectively. However, even if the wires (1 and 2) of Ide2 could be considered as meeting the plurality of core lines of claim 6, there is no suggestion in Ide2 that the wires (1 and 2) would be wider than the upper and lower resin tips (13 and 14) when arrayed laterally. The Examiner asserts that Fig. 2B shows the wires (1 and 2) laterally arrayed. Instead, Fig. 2B shows overlapping wires (1 and 2; *See* column 5, lines 12-19). It is therefore unclear whether the wires (1 and 2) would be wider than the upper and lower resin tips if they were laterally arrayed.

Claims 7 and 8 depend from claim 6, and are therefore allowable at least because of their dependency. Additionally, claim 8 sets forth a projected rib on a partition wall and a projection. The Examiner asserts that Ide2 teaches a projected rib on the face of element 13b, and that the projected rib is shown in Fig. 2B. However, it does not appear that anything projects from element 13b. Even if element 13b could be considered a partition wall, it is only one part and could not be considered both the wall itself and a rib projecting from the wall. Claim 8 comprises both a partition and a projected rib.

(C) Claim 4

Claim 4 depends from claim 1. As discussed above, Ide fails to teach or suggest every element of claim 1. Therefore, Ide certainly fails to teach or suggest every element of claim 4. Claim 4 is allowable over Ide at least because the Examiner does not cite any additional references against claim 4, and the deficiencies noted above with respect to claim 1 are not obvious to correct in view of Ide. Also, claim 4 sets forth both a locking portion and positioning portions located on both sides of the locking portion. The Examiner does not account for the multiple portions set forth in claim 4. The Examiner only identifies a single projection portion (41) as reading on both the locking portion and the positioning portions. Claim 4 is also allowable at least because the Examiner fails to account for the multiple separate elements set forth in claim 4.

(D) Claim 9 and 11

Claims 9 and 11 depend from claim 8. As discussed above, Ide2 fails to teach or suggest every element of claim 8 and therefore certainly fails to teach or suggest every element of claims 9 and 11. Claims 9 and 11 are allowable over Ide2 at least because the Examiner does not cite any additional references against claims 9 and 11, and the deficiencies noted above with respect to claim 8 are not obvious to correct in view of Ide.

New Claims

Applicants have added new claims 12-16 in order to more fully define the invention. New claims 12-16 are allowable over the cited references at least because none of the cited

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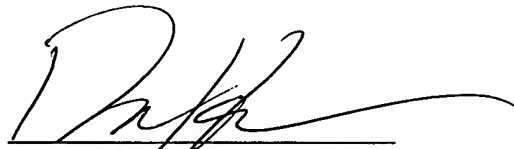
references teach or suggest a projected portion fit to a recessed portion outside of the region where a wire is provided.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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